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Between the fine lad and the world the matter stands thus: the latter finding him destitute of all distinctive characteristics, is greatly at a loss what to make of him. It cannot in conscience call him clever, and it does not like to say he is an ass, so it good-naturedly calls him a fine lad, taking shelter in the vagueness and indefiniteness of the term, since nobody can say precisely what a fine lad really means. Unlike most other reputations, that of the fine lad is wholly undisputed: it is generally bestowed on him by universal consent—no dissentient voice—every body agrees in calling him a fine lad. This is well, and must be a source of great comfort and satisfaction to the fine lad himself.

We have stated that nobody can say precisely what a fine lad really is, and this is true, generally speaking. But there is notwithstanding some degree of meaning attached to the term: it means, so far as it means any thing, a soft, meek, simpering, unresisting creature, who will allow himself to be kicked and cuffed about by any body and every body without resenting it, and who will take quietly any given quantity of abuse you choose to heap upon him. This we imagine to be the true reason why people call him a fine lad, just because he offers them, whether right or wrong, no resistance; hence it is too, we have no doubt, that he is so general a favourite.

As most people have a great fancy for having as much of their own way as possible, and as they find themselves much jostled and opposed in the indulgence of this laudable propensity by those who are bent on having the same enjoyment, they are delighted when they meet with one who readily makes way for them, and reward his simplicity by clapping him on the head, and calling him a fine lad.

The fine lad is a goose, poor fellow—no doubt of it—a decided goose, but he cannot help that: it is no fault of his; he means well, and is a most civil and obliging creature—all smiles and good nature. Being in reality good for little or nothing, having no activity, no tact whatever of any kind, the fine lad would in most cases be rather ill off as regards his temporalities, but for his steadiness. He is generally steady, and of sober and regular habits; and this, together with his extremely civil demeanour and inoffensive disposition, helps him on, and secures him in comfortable and respectable bread. You will thus for the most part find the fine lad in a well-doing way—in a good situation probably, and with every prospect of advancement. His employer likes him for his integrity and docility. He confesses that he is by no means clever, in fact that he is rather stupid; but, then, he is a fine lad. This character he gives him to every body, and every body acknowledges its justice, and calls him a fine lad too.

Fine lads are in great favour with the ladies, and no wonder, for fine lads are remarkably attentive to them: they make the best of all beaus. Thus it is that you are sure to find at least one fine lad at every tea party you go to. You know him at once by his soft speech and maiden-like smile, and by the readiness with which he undertakes, and the quiet gentleness with which he performs, the task of handing about the tea-bread, and discharging the other little duties of the occasion. At all this sort of work the fine lad is unapproachable—it is his element—here, if nowhere else, he shines resplendant. High in favour, however, as fine lads are with the fair sex, we have sometimes thought that there was fully more of esteem than admiration in the feeling with which they contemplate his character. They like his society, and have at all times their softest words and blandest smiles ready for him; but we much doubt if he is just the sort of man they would choose for a husband. We rather think not. We suspect they see in his nature something too much akin to their own, to allow of their ever thinking of him in the light of a protector.

The fine lad, however, does get married sometimes, and in justice to him, we are bound to say, always makes an excellent husband. He is gentle, kind, and indulgent: for the fine lad generally remains, in spirit at least, a fine lad to the last. So the ladies had better take this into consideration, having our authority for so doing, and henceforth look on fine lads with more seriousness than they have hitherto done. C.

FIDELITY.—This virtue is displayed in the fulfilment of promises, whether expressed or implied, in the conscientious scrupulous discharge of the duties of friendship, and in the keeping of secrets. It is therefore a great virtue, and may be used as a decisive test of character. He who has it is entitled to confidence and respect; he who lacks it merits

contempt. If a man carefully performs his promises, may we not confide in him? If he violates them, must we not despise him? If we find a person is true to friendship, we may be sure that he has just perceptions of virtue. If we find one who betrays a friend, or who is guilty of any species of treachery, we cannot doubt that he is essentially base and corrupt. To those who cannot keep a secret, we commend an anecdote of Charles II. of England, which ought to be engraved upon the heart of every man. When importuned to communicate something of a private nature, the subtle monarch said, "Can you keep a secret?" "Most faithfully," returned the nobleman. "So can I," was the laconic and severe answer of the king. Let parents, who desire that their children should possess the respect of the community and enjoy the pleasures of friendship, take care to imbue them with fidelity of character. —*Fireside Education, by S. G. Goodrich.*

ANECDOTE.—"Guzzling Pete," a half-witted country wight, and the town's jest, came home one rainy Saturday night so "darkly, deeply, beautifully blue," that he went to bed with his hat and boots on, and his old cotton umbrella under his arm. He got up about two o'clock the next afternoon, drunk with last night, and took his way to the meeting-house. Rev. Dr B— was at his "17thly" in the second of six divisions of a very comprehensive body of Hopkinstian divinity, when "Guzzling Pete" entered the church with an egg in each hand. He saw as through a glass darkly, and with evident commiseration, a man in black, very red in the face, for the day was oppressively warm, who seemed to utter something with a great deal of vehemence, while a considerable number of those underneath him were fast asleep—among them Deacon C—, with his shiny-bald head leaning against the wall. Pete, unobserved by the minister, balanced his egg, and with tolerable aim plastered its contents directly above the deacon's pate! Hearing the concussion, the worthy divine paused in his discourse, and looked daggers at the maudlin visitor. "Never mind, uncle," exclaimed the intruder: "jest you go on a-takin'—I'll keep 'em awake for you!" By this time the congregation were thoroughly aroused. "Mr L—," said the reverend pastor, with a seeming charity, which in his mortification he could scarcely have felt, and addressing a "tiding-man" near the door, "Mr L—, won't you have the kindness to remove that poor creature from the aisle? I fear that he is sick." "Sick!" stammered our qualmish hero, as he began to confirm the fears of the clergyman by very active symptoms; "s-i-c-k!—yes, and it's enough to make a dog sick to sit under such stupid preachin' as your'n: it's more'n I can stand under! Yes, take me out—the quicker the better!"

THE ASS.—The ass performs so many useful duties besides his choragic functions in our community, that he cannot be respectfully omitted. He is called a bad vocalist, though some amateurs prefer him to the mule; but he is perhaps underrated. There are many notes which alone are shocking to the ear, that have in concert an agreeable harmony. The gabble of the goose is not unpleasant in the orchestra of the barn-yard, and there are many instances, no doubt, in which braying would improve harmony. If one looks close into nature, he will find nothing, not even the gargle of the frog-pond, created in vain. At Musard's they often improve the spirit of a gallopade by the sudden clank and crash of a chain upon a hollow platform, with now and then a scream like the war-whoop of the Seminoles. What the Italians understand, and what most other nations do not, is the harmonious composition of discordant sounds. If a general concert of nature could be formed, the crow as well as the nightingale would be necessary to the perfect symphony; and it is likely even the file and hand-saw might be made to discourse excellent music. But even in a solo, the ass, according to Coleridge, has his merits. He has certainly the merit of execution. He commences with a few prelude notes, gently, as if essaying his organs, rising in a progressive swell to enthusiasm, and then gradually dies away to a pathetic close; an exact prototype of the best German and Italian compositions, and a living sanction of the genuine and authentic instructions of the *Académie de Musique*.

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